

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1215- Maryland Technology Internship Program

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Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Aarsh Sheth and I am a Senior at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) studying Biological Sciences with a minor in Philosophy and Social Welfare. I have interned at Project PLASE as an Entrepreneurial Intern this past Fall 2020 semester. Through my experiential learning experiences, I have learned non-profit management which is the hands-on experience I could only get in an internship site. Without these experiences, I would not have the network or professional experience I have today. I am here to express my support for House Bill 1215 which will provide more internship opportunities to students in non-technical areas across the state of Maryland.

The experiences at PLASE improved my understanding of the non-profit sector, and I was also able to gain management skills from the leaders and mentors there. The overall internship also further confirmed my goals of going into the field of community work and service. I believe my main impact at the internship was in relation to assisting clients with their health needs and helping with PLASE's outreach team. I also worked on a personal project of mine to develop a health survey to gather information about what services clients prefer to use. The funding that I received from being part of the program really gave me that additional opportunity to make an impact at Project PLASE. I truly believe that I was able to contribute

more to my community due to this experience and the financial support. The funding mainly allowed me to cover travel expenses, along with minor help in helping me pay for school. As many students cannot work for free in these times, HB 1215 can provide that additional resource in funding and support that can help many students achieve their goals.

By creating and building the Maryland Internship Opportunities Program, more students who struggle with getting paid internship opportunities in non-technical majors will have the ability to have an internship experience. Internships stimulate growth outside of the classroom, allow students to build their professional network and round out a students' early career to make them a more competitive candidate as they enter the workforce.

This program would positively impact workforce development in Maryland and provide financial support to companies working towards arts, education and social justice. I urge you to vote favorably for HB1215. Thank you for your time.